

THE KABUL TIMES

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Kabul 06° Sunny | Kandahar 17° Sunny | Herat 19° Cloudy | Jalalabad 18° Sunny | Mazar-e-Sharif 16° Sunny | Bamyan -2° Sunny

IEA-MOFA statement regarding U.S. President's remarks on the displacement of Gaza residents

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan considers the recent statements by the President of the United States regarding the forced displacement of Palestinians and their relocation to other countries as a blatant violation of international law. Gaza is an integral part of Palestinian territory, and no one else holds the authority to determine the fate of its people.

The Islamic Emirate believes that such plans not only reflect the sinister motives of the Zionist regime but also provoke widespread resentment among Muslims and escalating broader regional instability.

Given these circumstances, the Islamic Emirate urges influential nations and bodies advocating for justice worldwide to adopt a unified, pragmatic and timely position against such conspiracy.



Economy minister discusses humanitarian aid with Japanese ambassador

KABUL: Qari Din Mohammad Hanif, the acting Minister of Economy, met with Takayoshi Kuromaya, the Japanese Ambassador to Kabul Wednesday, focusing on the improvement of economic cooperation and the effectiveness and continuation of humanitarian aid.Appreciating Japan's humanitarian aid for returnees and those affected by natural disasters, Qari Din Mohammad Hanif called for further focus on the improving development aid with balanced development in different sectors, to create job opportunities and improve the living conditions and support the household economy in the country.



Meanwhile, Japanese ambassador shared information about his country's humanitarian aid of $27.4 million in 2024, which has been implemented through the United Nations offices in various sectors, and also assured the continuation of the development and humanitarian aid of his country in 2025, according to the statement."Japan will continue its development and humanitarian aid in the sectors of health, education, fight against drugs, alternative livelihoods, water management, combating climate change and addressing the problems of the displaced and returnees in 2025," the statement quoted him as saying.**The Kabul Times**

Health facility inaugurated in Laghman, ministry

KABUL: The Ministry of Public Health said Wednesday that a health facility worth 17 million Afghani has been inaugurated in the country's eastern province of Laghman.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by the provincial governor Mawlavi Shir Ahmad Haqqani, Public Health Director Dr. Samiullah Abid Niazi, officials from various organizations, religious scholars, and tribal elders, the ministry said.

Dr. Niazi stated that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) funded facility, spanning 4.5 acres of land and includes 18 rooms, a landscaped green area, a parking lot, and modern amenities, ensuring efficient healthcare services for the residents of Badpash district of the province.

He said that the facility will provide health services for more than 7,000 people in the district.

The Kabul Times



22 water supply projects to be implemented in Nangarhar

Twenty-two water supply projects to be implemented in Nangarhar



JALALABAD: Construction work on 22 water supply networks worth 120.4 million Afghani has been kicked off in the country's eastern province of Nangarhar, the provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development said in a statement Wednesday.

Addressing a ceremony, the director of the provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Mawlavi Qismatullah said that the projects would be implemented in 17 districts of the province.

Funded by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the water supply projects will provide potable water for 9,000 families in the districts, he said, adding that job opportunities will also be provided for hundreds of people during the implementation of the projects.

He assured that necessary efforts are underway to launch further welfare projects in the province.

The Kabul Time

Book reading increased by 90% in Panjshir

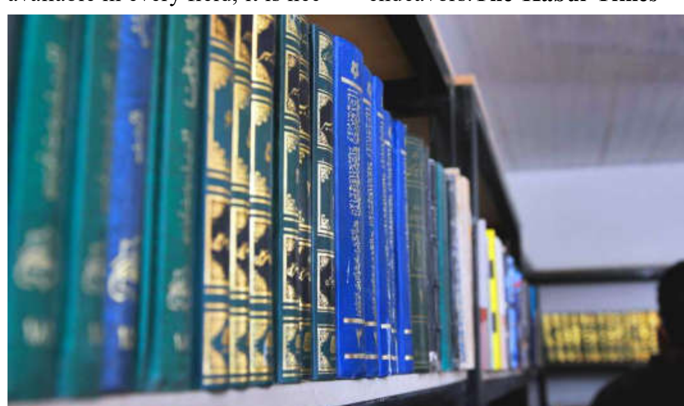
BAZARAK: The Information and Culture Department of Panjshir province said in a statement Wednesday that book reading among the people, particularly, youths has been increased by 90 percent this solar year comparing to the previous years.

Director of the provincial information and culture, Mawlavi Nasrullah Malikzada said that after the reestablishment of the Islamic Emirate, the culture of books reading has developed throughout the province comparing to the previous years.

Reading literary and historical works such as Masnavi Ma'navi, Shahnameh by Ferdowsi, and Eskandarnameh by Nizami Ganjavi, has been a tradition in Panjshir since long ago and is still considered an important part of the culture of the province.

It is common for two or three individuals to melodiously recite verses from these books in their style, followed by someone knowledgeable in the interpretation of classical Persian texts elaborating on their meaning.

The Masnavi and Shahnameh held a significant position among the people of Panjshir.Another point worth noting is that the tradition of book reading in the past, when literate individuals in society were few, and books were not readily available to the general public, could meet some of the cultural needs of that time. However, now that useful books aligned with contemporary needs are available in every field, it is necessary to encourage people to engage in reading useful books and current writings and to invest their energy in more important endeavors.**The Kabul Times**



Humanitarian aid should not be politicized, says Mawlavi Kabir

KABUL: Mawlavi Abdul Kabir, the acting Minister of Refugees and Repatriations of the Islamic Emirate, in a meeting with Takayoshi Kuromaya, the Japanese Ambassador to Kabul, emphasized that humanitarian aid should remain non-political.

Mawlavi Kabir expressed gratitude for Japan's ongoing humanitarian support to Afghan refugees and reiterated the call for neighboring countries to halt the forced deportation of Afghan refugees.

Reiterating the importance of keeping humanitarian aid free from political influence, he urged nations to avoid politicizing their aid efforts and provide humanitarian assistance for Afghan returnees and internally displaced persons.

Meanwhile, Kuromaya reaffirmed his country's commitment to providing assistance for Afghanistan in various critical sectors, including health, education, counter-narcotics, alternative livelihoods, water management, and climate change. **The Kabul Times**



Leftover U.S. military equipment assets of Afghanistan, says Balkhi

KABUL: The leftover U.S. military equipment and weapons in Afghanistan are the country's assets and will continue to be in the possession of the state of Afghanistan, Abdul Qahar Balkhi, the spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told CBS News the other day.Speaking to CBS News, Balkhi said: "People don't make deals on the assets of their states, but they make agreements through dialog and engagement to find spaces and areas of common interest."

"We would like to close the chapter of warfare and open a new chapter," he said.A few days ago, the Deputy spokesperson of the Islamic Emirate Mullah Hamdullah Fitrat reacted to the statement of the spokesman of the Pakistani Foreign Minister Shafqat Ali Khan, claiming that the presence of U.S. advanced weapons in Afghanistan has been an issue of deep concern for the safety and security of Pakistan and its citizens, said that the leftover U.S. military equipment and weapons in Afghanistan are in complete security and no one will be allowed to misuse them.**The Kabul Times**



Kamal Khan Dam officially inaugurated in Nimroz, ministry

KABUL: The Ministry of Water and Energy of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan said in a statement Wednesday that the Kamal Khan Dam has officially been inaugurated in Nimroz province's Chahar Barjak district.According to the statement, a number of high-ranking government officials and scholars, elders and Mujahidin have participated in the dam's inauguration ceremony.

"The dam, built by the Ministry of Water and Energy, will irrigate 174,000 hectares of land and generate 6 megawatts of electricity, while also controlling seasonal floods," the statement said, adding that its reservoir has the capacity to store up to 52 million cubic meters of fresh water.



Due to its vital role in water resource management, agricultural development, and energy production, the Kamal Khan Dam is considered an important step toward Afghanistan's economic stability and progress.

The 9-megawatt dam is considered the end of a five-decade dream of Afghans to better control the Helmand River as it nears Iran and convert Nimroz province into a powerful agricultural center.

The Kabul Times

Dozens of development projects completed in Badakhshan, official

FAIZABAD: The Director of the Economy Department of the country's northeastern province of Badakhshan, Din Ghulam Osama said Wednesday that 95 development projects worth 2.7 billion Afghani have been implemented in the province.Osama said the projects implemented in various sectors, including health, education, infrastructure, agriculture, disaster management, and energy, as well as vocational training and professional training, play a vital role in fostering sustainable growth, reducing inequalities, and enhancing the quality of life.He also emphasized the significance of these projects in improving the living standards of the local population and fostering economic growth in the region.The development projects have the potential to bring about transformative change. They're not just about building roads or schools; they're about building futures. However, for these projects to have a lasting impact, they need to be planned and executed with diligence, foresight, and a genuine understanding of the community they aim to serve. **The Kabul Times**



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Food for thought

Today's generation guarantees our bright future

"Afghanistan not a threat but rather an opportunity"

Since the establishment of security in the country more than three years ago, Afghanistan, under the Islamic Emirate has turned into a big opportunity rather than a threat. The country has become a proper hub for the implementation of development rojects,foreign investment, bolstering trade deals with the world nations, and in general strengthening positive engagement with the world powers.

According to a local media report, Gaziz Akbasov, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Kazakh embassy in Kabul, praised the Islamic Emirate's achievements in different fields and said that Afghanistan is not viewed a "threat but an opportunity."

In an exclusive interview with a local media, Akbasov said that stability in Afghanistan has a significant impact on the security of the region and Central Asia and the Kazakh diplomat emphasized that Astana does not view Afghanistan as a threat.

"Afghanistan is one of the key elements of security and stability in the Central Asian region. Based on this, Kazakhstan believes that Afghanistan is more of an opportunity for stability and security in Central Asia than a threat," Akbasov said as a local media quoted.

The people of Afghanistan welcome the good omen of the friendly Kazakhstan about Afghanistan as the country was the first to remove the name of Afghanistan from its banned list. However, in the field of recognition, it said it acts based on international laws and the decision of the United Nations Security Council.

Indeed, after the resumption of power by the Islamic Emirate, relations between Kabul and Astana expanded, and Kazakhstan did not close its embassy in Kabul after August 2021, but continued its diplomatic activities.

Other countries should also do their best to engage with the Islamic Emirate and act based on realities in Afghanistan, as the country has eliminated all insurgencies in the country and no threat from Afghanistan is posed to other nations.

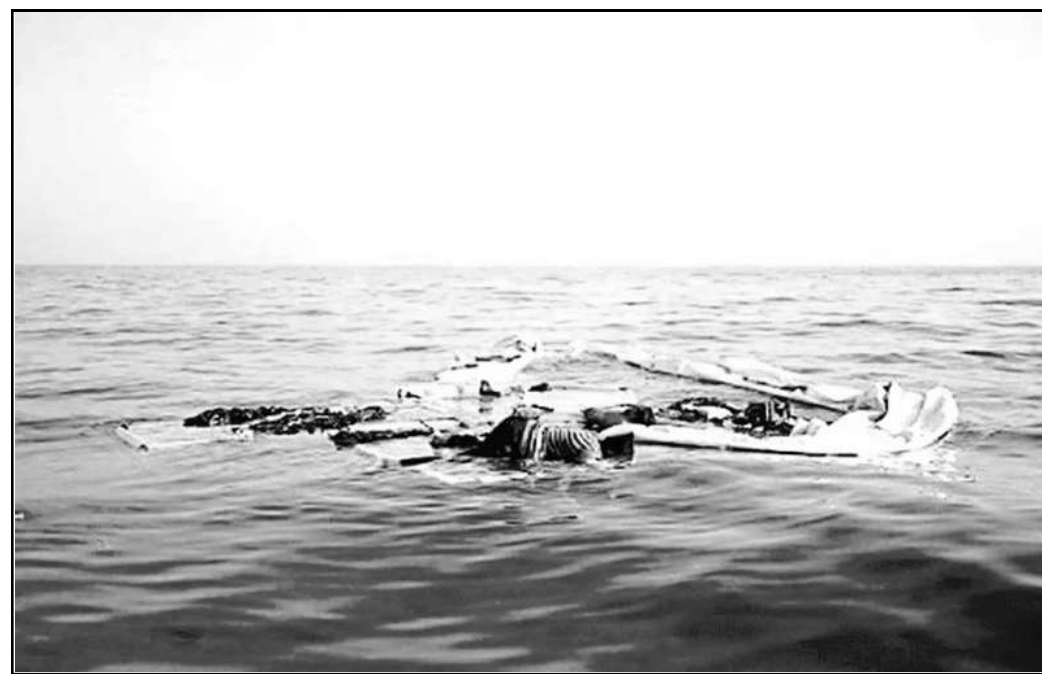
So, there is a need for investment in the infrastructures of the country from national and international companies and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan should do their best to draw attention from world countries towards both positive interaction and finally recognition as the issue of recognition after long years is very important for the country.

The Islamic Emirate has taken effective and practical steps in the country's development, and energy sectors and will do more in the future as security has become sure in the country.

In the industrial, mining and other areas, the country has done more eyeing Kazakhstan and other friendly countries for more investment in this field.

The rise of migration and its impact on the Afghan society

Migration has always been a part of Afghan history, driven by various social, economic, and environmental factors. In recent years, the number of people leaving Afghanistan has increased significantly, with many seeking better job opportunities, improved living conditions, and access to quality education and healthcare.



While migration can offer personal and economic benefits to individuals and their families, it also has wider effects on society, both positive and negative. Migration in Afghanistan occurs due to several key reasons, including economic difficulties, job shortages, limited access to education, and environmental changes.One of the main reasons for migration is the lack of job opportunities and economic stability. Many young Afghans struggle to find sustainable employment, leading them to seek work in other countries. Labor migration, especially to neighboring countries, has been a common practice for decades.Many students and professionals choose to migrate in search of better educational opportunities. Access to high-quality universities and professional training programs abroad encourages young Afghans to leave their home country to pursue their dreams.

Migration is also influenced by family connections and social factors. Some people move to join relatives who are already living abroad, while others seek a different lifestyle or new opportunities for their families.

Droughts, floods, and other environmental issues have forced many Afghan families, especially in rural areas, to relocate.

As agriculture is a primary source of income for many, unfavorable weather conditions make it difficult for farmers and herders to sustain their livelihoodsMigration affects Afghanistan in many ways, bringing both advantages and challenges.Many Afghan families rely on remittances sent by relatives working abroad.

These funds help cover daily expenses, healthcare, and education. However, excessive reliance on external income can reduce local productivity and workforce engagement.

One of the challenges of migration is the loss of skilled professionals such as doctors, engineers, and teachers. This "brain drain" weakens key sectors, making it difficult to improve healthcare, education, and infrastructure within Afghanistan.Migration can have emotional and psychological effects on families. Long-term separation from loved ones can lead to feelings of loneliness and social isolation. At the same time, some migrant communities establish strong support networks abroad, helping each other integrate and find opportunities.

Migration is a natural part of global development and has both benefits and challenges.

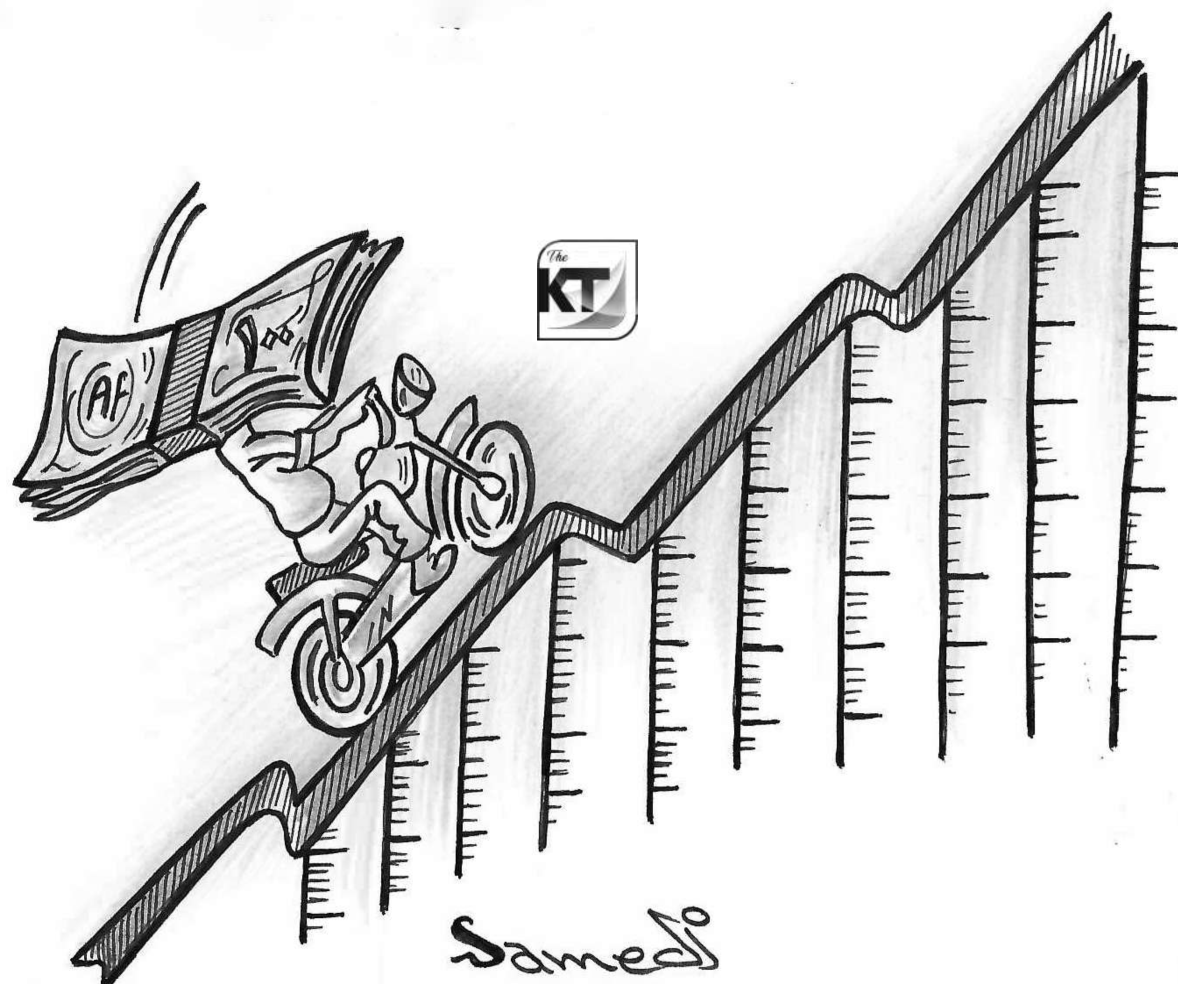
While it provides opportunities for individuals seeking a better life, it also affects Afghanistan's economy, workforce, and social structures.

By addressing the root causes of migration and creating opportunities within the country, Afghanistan can benefit from both its local and global communities.Migration is a complex issue with deep economic, social, and cultural implications. While migration can provide individuals with better opportunities, it also creates challenges for Afghanistan, particularly in terms of workforce shortages, economic dependency, and social change.A balanced approach to migration, one that maximizes benefits while minimizing negative impacts, is essential for Afghanistan's long-term development. This can be achieved through policies that create local opportunities, support returning migrants, and engage the Afghan diaspora in national progress.

By addressing the root causes of migration and fostering a stable and prosperous environment, Afghanistan can retain its talent, strengthen its economy, and create a better future for all its citizens Afghanistan, like many other countries, faces the challenge of balancing migration with national development. While some level of migration is inevitable and even beneficial, excessive migration, especially of skilled workers, can create long-term issues for the country's progress. Managing migration effectively requires a multi-dimensional approach, involving government policies, private sector engagement, and international cooperation.

Many Afghans living abroad still have strong emotional and familial ties to their homeland. If Afghanistan provides better economic opportunities, security, and a stable environment, many skilled professionals and businesspeople may consider returning. Incentives such as tax breaks, investment opportunities, and housing assistance could encourage Afghans to bring their knowledge and resources back home.A key reason for migration is the lack of job opportunities. By investing in industries such as agriculture, technology, manufacturing, and renewable energy, Afghanistan can create more employment opportunities. Encouraging entrepreneurship and small businesses can also help retain talent within the country.A well-educated and skilled population is less likely to migrate in search of opportunities abroad. Expanding vocational training programs, modernizing education, and encouraging scientific research can equip young Afghans with the skills needed to succeed within their own country.Migration is a complex issue that requires a balanced and strategic approach. While it provides opportunities for economic growth, education, and cultural exchange, it also presents significant challenges that need careful management.By creating more opportunities at home, strengthening legal migration channels, and leveraging the skills of the Afghan diaspora, Afghanistan can turn migration into an asset rather than a crisis.With the right policies and global cooperation, migration can contribute to a stronger, more resilient Afghan society, paving the way for a brighter future for all.

Dr. Bushra Parnian



Electricity shortages in southwest Afghanistan disrupting daily life and economic activity

Part II

Officials from the Helmand Industrial Factories Union have stated that these factories alone require 25 megawatts of electricity daily.

Meeting this demand privately costs millions of Afghanis per day, making it an expensive challenge for industrialists.



Ghulam Yahya Pashtoon, the head of Helmand's Chamber of Industry and Commerce, emphasized that if a permanent electricity supply is provided, more factories will be established in the province.

He explained that due to the lack of electricity, many essential industries are unable to operate.

Similarly, Ghulam Sediq Helmandi, a civil activist in the province, stressed the importance of a stable electricity supply in creating job opportunities. He noted that a reliable electricity source in Helmand would encourage investors to establish businesses, ultimately leading to thousands of employment opportunities for the unemployed.

He urged the government to prioritize the establishment of a permanent electricity supply, stating: "A stable electricity source is crucial for Helmand. The reason behind the existing factories in Helmand is the Kajaki power plant. Investors always prefer locations with a stable electricity supply. When factories are built, job opportunities automatically increase."

The neighboring province of Kandahar, which relies heavily on Kajaki's electricity, faces similar issues. Currently, 320 industrial factories exist in Kandahar, out of which only 180 are operational, while 120 remain inactive, mainly due to electricity shortages.

Factory owners in Kandahar argue that without Kajaki's power, no other electricity source can sustain their operations.Haji Khan Gul, the owner of an iron-melting factory, revealed that he invested $3 million in his factory, but due to power shortages, his business is now at risk of collapse. He explained that if his factory received 24-hour electricity, it could provide employment for 300 workers.Currently, he spends 400 to 600 liters of diesel daily to generate electricity privately, significantly increasing operational costs. He stated, "We have invested $3 million in this factory. Right now, only one section is active, producing iron, and we have 150 employees. If we had a stable power supply, we could employ 300 people. Since there is no reliable electricity, we use diesel-powered machines, consuming 400 to 600 liters of fuel daily. These costs are unsustainable.

The rising fuel prices make it harder for us to continue operations. We need a stable electricity supply from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, as the local power supply is unreliable. Currently, we produce 25 tons of iron daily, but we could produce much more with sufficient electricity."

Economic experts have expressed concern over the shutdown of 120 factories in Kandahar, stating that electricity shortages pose a serious economic challenge.

They believe that restarting these factories would create thousands of job opportunities.

Wali Mohammad Pakhla, an economic analyst, emphasized the importance of government intervention in supporting industries. He suggested that the government should remove all barriers preventing factory operations.

He explained, "To improve Afghanistan's economic situation, we must support domestic industries. This can only be achieved by eliminating obstacles that hinder industrial operations. The first step should be establishing a stable and permanent electricity supply for both the public and the industrial sectors. This would ensure the sustainability of local industries and contribute to economic growth."

Ehsanullah Wolasmal

Role of government in institutionalizing Islamic culture in trade markets

Part IV

In the previous section, it was explained that the efforts of Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) to institutionalize Islamic culture and values in trade and commerce serve as an exemplary model.

His initiatives are recognized as a prominent example of a sound financial system based on Islamic principles in Islamic history.

These measures contributed to economic and social growth while ensuring the implementation of justice in the Islamic community.

Today, in Afghanistan's contemporary reality, our trade markets and financial systems are grappling with numerous unusual crises, including currency fluctuations, sanctions and economic isolation, political instability, infrastructural challenges, the lack of a standard banking system, liquidity shortages, a lack of production tools, and the absence of domestic production opportunities.

Despite the abundance of employment opportunities, these challenges have led to significant obstacles.

Undoubtedly, overcoming these crises requires essential elements such as security, political stability, work on economic infrastructure, and the passage of time.

On one hand, these fundamental issues exist as material challenges, but Afghanistan's trade markets and financial system also suffer from spiritual and ethical problems, as mentioned in previous sections.

These moral deficiencies have exhausted the Afghan people and at the same time, have eroded trust and credibility in the market.

Imagine a scenario where a product with the same quality and quantity is sold at different prices in Afghan markets.

This discrepancy reflects a lack of fairness among traders and inadequate oversight by authorities.

Similarly, when the value of the dollar increases even by a single rupee, product prices soar disproportionately, even for domestically produced goods.

However, when the dollar's value drops, there is no corresponding reduction in prices.

Moreover, in markets and shopping centers, it is difficult to distinguish between high-quality and low-quality goods.

Likewise, it is nearly impossible to trust the honesty of sellers.

Many merchants swear that they purchased an item at a certain price, yet they sell it for half of the price they initially claimed.

This practice has led to a significant loss of public trust in the market, leaving consumers uncertain about fixed prices. Even when someone buys a product at its actual price, they remain doubtful about its quality, fearing that they may have been deceived.

Concealing the truth, excessive swearing, price manipulation, lack of fairness, unfair competition to attract customers, fraud in weight measurements, failure to comply with municipal pricing guidelines, abandonment of ethics, and the absence of Islamic moral values are some of the critical issues that have destabilized the market.

These factors have also stripped current Afghan markets of prosperity and blessings.

Although religious scholars have repeatedly addressed these issues, they continue to dominate the markets, troubling people daily.

At times, it even seems as though there is no solution to these challenges.

We live in a society that firmly believes that sustenance is granted by Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), and striving to earn it is merely a religious duty that must be observed.

However, unfortunately, people in our society contradict their own beliefs by violating Allah's commands in pursuit of greater profits.

Traders openly advertise products that are harmful to health, and in their commercial promotions, they boldly claim that a product possesses specific ingredients or qualities—claims that are entirely false.

A clear example of this is advertisements for carbonated soft drinks and energy drinks, where there is a vast difference between what is stated in the advertisements and the opinions of experts.

Firooz Ahmad Ebrahimi

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Dalwa 18-1403 Thursday 06 February 2025 INo: 268-Vol: LXII

USD	GBP	INR	PKR	EUR	IRR	AED
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Rashid Khan sets a new record, becoming T20 cricket's top wicket-taker

Afghan cricketer Rashid Khan has set a new world record, becoming the leading wicket-taker in T20 cricket. He now holds the top position with 633 wickets across international and franchise T20 matches.

Rashid achieved this milestone during a match in the SA20, South Africa's premier T20 league. He dismissed Dinath Walallawita, marking his 633rd wicket in the format.

With this achievement, he surpassed former West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo, who had previously held the record with 631 wickets. Unlike Rashid, Bravo has retired from professional cricket.

What makes Rashid's record even more remarkable is the number of matches he has played. He reached this feat in just 461 games, while Bravo took over 580 matches to claim his 631 wickets. This highlights Rashid's exceptional consistency and effectiveness as a bowler in T20 cricket.



Rashid Khan, known for his aggressive leg-spin bowling, has been a dominant force in global T20 leagues. He has represented Afghanistan in international cricket while also playing for top franchises in leagues such as the Indian Premier League (IPL), Big Bash League (BBL), Pakistan Super League (PSL), and The Hundred. His ability to take crucial wickets in high-pressure situations has made him one of the most sought-after players in the format.

At just 25 years old, Rashid continues to be a key player for Afghanistan and various T20 franchises worldwide. With several years of cricket still ahead of him, he is likely to extend his record further and establish himself as one of the greatest T20 bowlers of all time.**The Kabul Times**

Afghanistan futsal coach Majid Mortazavi's contract extended for another year



Afghanistan Football Federation announced Wednesday, January 17, that the contract of Majid Mortazavi, the head coach of Afghanistan's national futsal team, has been extended for another year.

The decision was revealed during a press conference held in Kabul.

Under the leadership of Mortazavi, an Iranian coach, Afghanistan's futsal team is set to participate in multiple international competitions this year.

The team will compete in tournaments hosted by the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco. Additionally, one of the key events on their calendar is a four-nation futsal tournament in Brazil.

This extension follows Mortazavi's leadership in 2023, during which Afghanistan took part in two major tournaments—the AFC Futsal Asian Cup and the 2024 FIFA Futsal World Cup held in Uzbekistan.

While the team faced tough competition, their participation at such high-level events was seen as a step forward for Afghan futsal.

The Afghanistan Football Federation's decision to extend Mortazavi's contract signals their confidence in his coaching abilities.

With his continued guidance, Afghan futsal aims to further strengthen its presence on the international stage.

As the team prepares for a challenging year ahead, fans and sports analysts are eager to see how Afghanistan will perform against some of the strongest futsal nations.

The upcoming tournaments will be crucial in shaping the team's future and providing them with valuable experience at the global level.

The Kabul Times

Al Hilal's 4-1 victory over persepolis propels them to table-topping position

Saudi Arabian club Al Hilal secured the top position in the AFC Champions League standings after a dominant 4-1



victory over Iran's Persepolis in the seventh round of the tournament.

The match, held as part of the Asian Champions League group stage, saw Al Hilal extend its winning streak to six matches.

With this latest triumph, Al Hilal now stands at 19 points, further solidifying its lead at the top of the table.

The team was already in the first position before this match, but the convincing win reinforced its status as one of the strongest contenders in the competition.

Al Hilal's performance throughout the tournament has been impressive, demonstrating their strength in attack and defensive resilience.

Their latest victory against Persepolis, one of Iran's top clubs, highlights their determination to compete for the AFC Champions League title.

As the competition progresses, Al Hilal's position at the top of the table puts them in a strong position for the knockout rounds.

Fans and analysts are closely watching the team's performance, expecting them to maintain their momentum and challenge for another continental title.

The Kabul Times

Work on 4 power sub-stations resumed in Herat

KABUL: Construction work on four power substations worth $2 million has been resumed in Herat province, Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat said in a statement Wednesday.



The power plants will supply electricity to 40,000 families in the districts of Karkh, Pashtun Zarghun, Obeh, and Chesht of the province, the statement said.

Abdul Bari Omar, CEO of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat, said the power plants, which remained incomplete and were previously financed by the World Bank, will now be completed with an investment of $2 million from Breshna Company.

The substation will provide electricity to approximately 40,000 families in four districts of the province.

Meanwhile, Mawlavi Islamjar, Herat Governor, emphasizes that sufficient funds are available for implementing development projects in the country and assures that large-scale development projects will be launched to achieve self-sufficiency in Afghanistan.He assured that construction work on some power projects, including the Pule-e-Hashimi substation, 200 megawatts of wind power plants, and 100 megawatts of solar power plants, will be started in the province.The World Bank funded the construction of the power plants in the previous government; however, following the resumption of power by the Islamic Emirate, the World Bank withdrew its financial support for the project.

The Kabul Times

Amid ceasefire, Goma residents race to bury 2,000 bodies

Aid groups help Goma residents bury 2,000 bodies after last week's battles, fearing disease spread.People in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo's Goma rushed to bury some 2,000 victims of last week's battles for the city as they feared the spread of disease amid a ceasefire.

The Rwanda-backed M23 rebels, who captured Goma, declared a ceasefire on Monday and largely upheld it, though some residents reported sporadic shooting and looting on Tuesday.

People in the city took stock of bombed-out buildings and tried to clear overflowing morgues. More than 2,000 bodies of people killed in last week's conflict require burial in Goma, the DRC's communications minister said overnight.

The United Nations said at least 900 people were killed and almost 3,000 injured in the days of fighting in Goma leading up to its capture.

The scale of the civilian harm was still emerging with reports of people caught in the crossfire, overwhelmed hospitals and bodies left in the street.Julienne Zaina Barabara, a resident of the Katoyi neighbourhood, said one of her children was killed last week



and two were wounded by flying shrapnel when an explosive hit near their home.

"We took them all to hospital where one of them died after three hours. The other two are still receiving treatment. They had scans, and one still has shrapnel in his head."Days without power last week affected refrigeration at morgues, leading to a "race against time" to identify bodies, said Myriam Favier, head of the International Committee of the Red Cross sub-delegation in Goma.

Aljazeera

Top US general visits UAE to look at ways of boosting ties

The top US military general for the Middle East visited UAE this week to discuss boosting bilateral cooperation, the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) said on Tuesday.

Erik Kurilla met with UAE National Security Advisor Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed and Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Lt. Gen. Issa Al Mazrouei, CENTCOM said.The meetings focused on security challenges in the region, ways to mitigate their risks, and a shared interest in defense innovation such as artificial intelligence (AI) and technology. "They also discussed strengthening military-to-military ties between the two countries, such as continued joint exercises to improve interoperability and readiness, as well as efforts to secure shared economic prosperity," CENTCOM said.

The three officials agreed to continue deepening bilateral security ties. The UAE is one of two major defense partners of the US, the other being India. Kurilla is expected to make other regional stops, including Bahrain.

Al-Arabiya

Police say 11 people killed in Sweden school campus shooting

The attack in Orebro has been described as the "worst mass shooting in Swedish history"

Police say 11 people have been killed in a shooting at an education centre in central Sweden, including the suspected gunman.

Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson described Tuesday's attack at Risbergska school in Orebro, 200km (124 miles) west of the capital city Stockholm, as the "worst mass shooting in Swedish history".

Police said the suspect is among the dead and is believed to have acted alone. They added that the motive was still unclear but ruled out anything "ideological".

"It is difficult to take in the magnitude of what has happened today," Kristersson said at an evening news conference.

Police earlier warned the death toll could continue to rise as several people had been injured.

In a statement on Wednesday morning, police said the number of injured remains unclear.

These centres are attended primarily by people who have not finished primary or secondary school.A locator map of the region shows Orebro, which is in the southern part of Sweden, and within the context of the city, shows where the shooting took place - at the Campus Risbergska, a community college.

The justice minister, who appeared alongside the prime minister on Tuesday evening, shared his condolences for those affected by the "tragedy" and reassured citizens that schools in the country would be safe to return to on Wednesday.

Nearby hospitals had cleared their emergency rooms and intensive care units to free up space for patients, local media reported.

Orebro University Hospital said five people injured by gunshot wounds were treated at its emergency room. An additional sixth person, not injured by a gun, had "minor injuries" treated, it said.No children were among the people being treated there, the municipality for Orebro County said in an update.**bbc**

IAEA postpones mission to Zaporizhzhia plant due to lack of security from Russia

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has postponed the rotation of its mission to the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant due to a lack of security guarantees from Russia, Ukraine's foreign ministry said on Wednesday.

"This is not the first time the Kremlin has used blackmail as a tool to intimidate international experts and undermine their independence," a ministry spokesman said in a statement.

"We will not allow Russia to undermine the Agency's independence and impartiality in



order to achieve its criminal goals." **Al-Arabiya**